THE
RECONSTRUCTIONIST

DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF JUDAISM AS A RELIGIOUS CIVILIZATION, TO THE UPBUILDING OF ISRAEL'S ANCIENT HOMELAND, AND TO THE FURTHERANCE OF UNIVERSAL FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE.

Vol. II. May 1, 1936 Iyar 9, 5696 No. 6

EDITORIALS

CLEVELAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

PARLIAMENT AND PALESTINE

MUSIC OUT OF ZION

ABOLISH CHILD LABOR

PALESTINE AND THE DIASPORA

by Samuel Dinin

FASCISM: AMERICAN STYLE

by Isaac Katz

Published by

THE SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF JUDAISM

15 West 86th Street, New York, N. Y.

THIS ISSUE OF

THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST

is typical of every issue

- **It contains editorials and articles on Palestine, on the Diaspora, on the relation that should exist between them, and on problems of the general scene.**

- **No Jewish, ethical or religious problem is alien to THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST.**

- **Would you like to send a copy of this issue to some of your friends? They will undoubtedly be interested to subscribe.**

- **List them below and we will take care of the rest.**

THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST,
15 West 86th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Please send a sample copy of THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST to the following:

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

NAME ..... ADDRESS .....

You may (not) mention my name.

NAME .....

Annual Subscription $1.00
Foreign $1.25

ADDRESS .....

.....

THE
RECONSTRUCTIONIST

Vol. II. May 1, 1936 Iyar 9, 5696 No. 6

EDITORIAL BOARD
MORDECAI M. KAPLAN, Chairman
Ben Zion Bokser Ira Eisenstein
Israel S. Chipkin Eugene Kohn
Samuel Dinin Leon S. Lang
Milton Steinberg

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Isaac B. Berkson Israel Goldstein
Barnett R. Brickner Jacob S. Golub
Alexander M. Dushkin Edward L. Israel
Hannah Machlowitz, Secretary

The RECONSTRUCTIONIST is published bi-weekly for twenty consecutive issues starting in October, by The Society for the Advancement of Judaism, 15 West 86th St., New York, N. Y. Subscription $1.00 a year; foreign $1.25; individual copy 10 cents. Entered as second class matter January 9, 1935, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.
The editorials represent the opinions of the editors only.

EDITORIALS

The Cleveland Community Council

THE April issue of *Notes and News,* published by the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, contains an article entitled "Unifying Jewish Group Activities," written by Max Simon, the president of the Cleveland Jewish Community Council. Mr. Simon's description of the history, organization and purpose of the Community Council serves as an excellent illustration of what can be done, when Jews apply "common sense to community organizations." In Cleveland, they realized that they "cannot and will not liquidate the business of being Jews. It is merely elementary sense, therefore, to make our Jewish life as intelligent and constructive as possible."

Our readers should be interested in how the Jews in Cleveland went about it. An original survey, conducted about ten years ago, made them realize the need for some organization which "would make for the fullest participation of all elements in Jewish community life." As a result of this survey, a Jewish Welfare Fund, a Bureau of Jewish Education and a research committee were formed. About two years ago, another study was made, and the proposal was made that a Community Council be formed. Small meetings were held by the groups representing the various Jewish interests in the city, and after careful consideration, each group—the rabbis, the journalists, the fraternal organizations, etc.—unanimously voted to participate in the establishment of the new Council.

Representatives of the existing bodies came together, formulated their methods of procedure, and have since functioned to the satisfaction of all interested Jews in the community. Already they have taken action of "general concern to the Jewish community"; and because the Council is truly representative of all Jews in the city, the Jews feel that they can, in all confidence, permit the Council to speak in their name, while those with whom the Council negotiates, for their part, are satisfied that they are working with a truly authoritative and representative body.

It is extremely gratifying to observe how well Mr. Simon understands the nature of Jewish chaos in other cities, and in his own before the Council came into being. He writes, "The tragedy is not that we disagree, but that the mechanics of Jewish life are such that every facility is offered for disagreement and very few for agreement." Mr. Simon has no illusions about the possibility of imposing uniformity of belief or opinion on any Jewish group but he does have great faith in the possibility of united action. "A Council acting as an open forum at least offers the medium for unity of ac-

tion even where uniformity of thought may be lacking." The Council in Cleveland has discovered that it has helped to fuse the fragmented Jewish life into some kind of organic unity; but they are wise enough not to regard the Council as a panacea for all the ills of Jewry. "It has been and remains an experiment in the positive development of our Jewish community life."

We of the Reconstructionist are naturally delighted with the Cleveland experiment. It is difficult for us to say just how far our movement is responsible for it, and for similar attempts in other parts of the country. But we are not as keen about credit as we are about impressing our readers with the fact that what Cleveland has done is nothing more or less than taking a step in the inevitable direction in which Jewish life in this country must move if its inherent positive forces are once permitted to flow freely. The concept of Judaism as a civilization places community organization at the crux of its program, not in order to impose an alien and untried program upon an unwilling Jewry. The constant appeal for community organization which we have made has been our attempt merely to articulate the direction in which we have seen Jewish life moving, and by that articulation, to hasten the movement before the forces of disintegration have broken down Jewish life too far.

The Community Council in Cleveland corresponds almost exactly to what has been called the "interim form of Jewish communal organization." Mr. Simon rightly conceives it as a "simple structure which can grow and develop as the community grows and develops." "Judaism in Transition" (p. 308) describes it as "an interim form of Jewish communal organization not so radically different from the status quo as that which is ideally desirable, but one which will retain enough of the form and spirit of such an organization to lead toward its eventual consummation." The leaders of the Cleveland project would probably disavow adherence to any "philosophy" of Jewish life. But we wish to make clear that the very desire on their part to bring together "every type of organized group and representing every shade of opinion" itself reflects a point of view. To repeat, Reconstructionism is the articulation of that point of view; its philosophy of Jewish life is designed to make provision for any Jew, of any belief or practice or interest who desires to be a Jew, in a communally organized body which shall reflect the totality of Jewish life.

May we appeal to all who are engaged upon such enterprises as the Cleveland Council not to fear philosophies, but to espouse them. By means of philosophies, the very action that is taken by one community is clarified in the minds of others, and helps that same community to envisage its purposes with clearer vision. If Community Councils are to function well, they must have an intelligent grasp of the significance of their actions, and understand the full implications of what they are doing. So long as they deal merely with such problems as the political abuses of the "Jewish vote," or the conflicts that arise when various functions are scheduled for the same night, they will probably be able to get along without a philosophy of Jewish life. But when issues arise that touch upon more vital questions, it will make all the difference in the world whether the Council is inclined to conceive of Judaism in terms of a minimum of Jewishness or whether they conceive of it in terms of a maximum of Jewishness. It is important to realize that the primary implication of Community organization is that Judaism is more than a religion, that it involves the whole body of cultural, social, economic, and national problems.

In the meantime, however, our congratulations are extended to the fortunate Jews of Cleveland, whose Jewish life is being brought out of chaos into organization.

Parliament and Palestine

A FORTNIGHT ago the British Parliament debated the question of the legislative council which the mandatory government projects for Palestine. The tone of the discussion was, to put it mildly, revealing. The proposed legislative council was castigated with an intensity which left nothing to be desired by the most devoted Zionist. Members of both Houses pointed out that a legislative council in Palestine at the present time would serve only to give support to the Arab obstructionists, without, in view of the political immaturity of the Arabs, serving the purposes of democracy. The land legislation of the British administration, its immigration policies, its attitude toward Jewish colonization generally, were subjected to a scathing criticism. Indeed, so keen was the resentment against the British policy which was expressed in the House of Commons that had the issue come to a vote, the government would have gone down to defeat. All in all, the day marked a definite triumph for the Zionist cause.

The first interesting question which arises in the minds of those who have read the news accounts is this. Who is running Palestine anyway? If, as the debates indicate, the sentiment of Parliament is so definitely sympathetic to the Jewish cause in Palestine, how is one to explain the obstructionist tactics of the British administrators? The only possible inference is that the Colonial Office with its civil service machine has taken the law into its own hands. But the vivid demonstration of the difference in sentiment between Parliament and the Colonial Office cannot possibly be without effect. In the first place, the world now knows where British public opinion stands. In the second place, the Colonial Office itself cannot help but take cognizance of the criticism to which it has been subjected. Without being duly optimistic we have reason to believe that the Parliamentary debates will have an effect for the good upon the Jewish position in Palestine.

The second conclusion to be drawn from this particular incident is the demonstration of the value of the World Zionist Organization. Attitudes such as the members of the Houses of Commons and of Lords voiced do not spring like Minerva full-born out of the head of some Zeus. They represent the results of a careful program of education. The fact that the debate ran as it did is a tribute to the statesmanship of the political department of the World Zionist Organization, and a rebuke to those who believe that the program of building a Jewish homeland in Palestine is entirely an economic one which can be fulfilled without any regard to international politics.

And yet to the Zionist world The Reconstructionist issues the following word of warning. What happened in Parliament was pleasing, gratifying and encouraging. It will doubtless yield some good. But the Jewish world must not allow itself for a moment to imagine that it can now depend upon England to do its task for it. Palestine will be built neither by the British government nor by the League of Nations nor by paper guarantees. It will be built only through the efforts of the Jewish people. These efforts should now be redoubled, to take advantage of the favorable sentiment which prevails in England. The work of the Keren Hayesod and Keren Kayemeth must be carried forward. The public fund-raising bodies which alone give assurance of a sane, balanced program of development for Palestine should meet with full support. Always there must be the consciousness that the Jewish group stands on its own feet. If England is sympathetic, all the better; and if not, the Jewish people will continue undisdisturbed to the realization of its historic ideal.

Music Out of Zion

DESPITE the disturbed state of mind, bordering on panic, in which Jews find themselves, they can still engage in creative and constructive undertakings. One such undertaking deserves especial notice: namely, the movement to establish in Palestine a musical academy of the highest order. The initiation of this movement took place in 1918, on the battlefields of France, when the Jewish soldiers in the American army resolved to establish a Memorial Conservatory in Erez Yisrael to honor those Jews who had fallen in the war. The movement was given impetus by the interest which Bronislaw Huberman displayed in the musical development of modern Palestine. Jascha Heifetz, Leopold Godovsky, and other important figures in the musical world have endorsed the movement. All these forces have recently been united in the common task of establishing in Palestine an academy building and a concert hall to house that institute of music in Palestine which gives promise of most distinguished achievement.

Observe what a movement like this involves. Gifted members of our people, like Huberman, Godovsky and Heifetz, are pressed into the service of the Jewish renaissance. The Jewish veterans of the World War and the Jewish Legion for Palestine are occupied with cultural values, and not with the glorification of war or the instigation of political machinations. Disparate and remote yearnings for Jewish self-expression are mobilized and translated into a common creative effort. And Palestine advanced another step toward the realization of that ideal for which tens of thousands of Jews throughout the world have given of their energies and their means, the ideal of constituting a cultural center for world Jewry.

A musical academy in Palestine should perform three specific functions. It should, first, advance Jewish musical research. The gigantic task of reconstructing the origins of Jewish music has already been assumed by Prof. Rosovsky, who for years has devoted himself to studying the history of the Biblical cantillations. So eminent a critic as Olin Downes, of the *New York Times,* has paid high tribute to the work Rosovsky has accomplished thus far. This work must go on, and Rosovsky should be given every opportunity to complete it. It cannot be delayed for the invasion of western civilization into the hinterlands of Eastern Jewry may soon corrupt the pure traditions of those Jews who have preserved the closest approximation of ancient Jewish chants. It is estimated that in twenty-five years, it might be impossible any longer to recapture the motifs which bear so close a resemblance to the earliest Jewish music.

The academy should, secondly, educate Palestine in the highest traditions of the world's music. Through the establishment of orchestras, choral societies, and the development of distinguished soloists, our people in Erez Yisrael will come to know the musical treasures of other civilizations. As Huberman learned on his visit to Palestine, there is a great hunger for music among Palestinians which pleads to be satisfied. It will be extremely significant, furthermore, to have Bach and Beethoven resound in the concert hall of Palestine. The old bogey of national isolation will at last be laid low. All our Jews who suffer from "ghetto-phobia" will realize that Palestine is not shutting out the culture of the world, but that, like Jewish life at its best in the past, it is assimilating the finest of all civilizations, and in doing so is enriching its own.

Thirdly, the academy should encourage the creation of Jewish music. We had always hoped that our people would once again wax creative in the arts. This is the golden opportunity to add to the rich variety of the world's music. Our people have been accused of producing only virtuosi, interpreters of the music of others, middlemen, so to speak, in the economy of sound. In the economy of goods and services we have refuted that same accusation

by our productive labor on the land and in the factory. In this economy we can refute the charge by evoking the creative genius of Israel's sweet singers.

For us in the Diaspora, the possibilities inherent in an academy of music are boundless. Music speaks the universal language of man. Although its thought and emotions are couched in unique phrases of a particular civilization, men of all nations understand its message and respond to its vibrations. Of all the cultural creations that will emerge from Palestine, music will be most universally appreciated. The music of Erez Yisrael will not have to hurdle the obstacles of language in order to reach our hearts. The new Jewish music will interpret Israel to the world and to its own constituents throughout the world. We stand in great need of this music. In ancient times our people sat upon the banks of the river in Babylon and asked, "How can we sing the songs of the Lord in a foreign land?"; today the very existence of the Jews depends upon their singing the songs of Zion in foreign lands, for without such songs Jewish life would be drab and joyless.

Our heartiest good wishes go out to those who have taken the lead in this work of building an academy of music in Palestine. Our earnest appeal goes out to our readers to give every support to this significant project.

Abolish Child Labor!

UNLESS unforeseen circumstances develop, the State of New York will once again refuse to ratify the proposed national child labor amendment. The Senate's Judiciary Committee is following its familiar strategy and is trying to kill the measure in committee. If it succeeds, the pros and cons of ratification will not even be presented on the floor of the legislature.

The evils of child labor are apparent enough. Industrialists, anxious to shop in the cheapest labor market, have been, wherever practicable, employing children to do the work of adults. Children, particularly if they are caught young enough, are also likely to offer the industrialists another advantage—immunity from "labor trouble" and trade unionism. The enemies of child labor had hoped that the NRA codes would eventually do away with it. But ever since the abrogation of the NRA, child labor has been on the increase in all industries. The champions of child labor can see no harm in it. The displaced adults undoubtedly suffer hardships from it. But if they are blessed with an abundant progeny it may perhaps not be so bad after all. They will stay home or possibly take courses in adult education. The children will earn the family's daily bread.

This condition is vicious not only on moral and religious grounds, as a tendency that degrades and exploits those who ought to have our best care and attention—our country's children. It is also vicious because it is bound to accentuate all the ravages of the economic depression. It will inevitably lead to increases in unemployment and depress the living standards of the masses. This is the staff of social unrest that can bode only ill for our civilization.

The action of the Senate's Judiciary Committee demonstrates, of course, the effectiveness of lobbying on the part of the big interests. It should, by the same token, challenge the forces of social reform to fight more militantly. The recent United Synagogue Convention in Washington committed itself to translating its religious affirmations into ethical social action. Here is a concrete issue where it may assert itself. Not only the national organization, but all its constituent congregations with all their affiliated bodies should go on record in favor of ratifying the amendment and make their action known to our legislators in Albany. The same should be done by individuals in their own name. We urge our readers to take the initiative in such

a move. That is what Reconstructionism, at its best, calls for. Similar action is, we understand, being taken by other religious and liberal groups. It is not too late yet for the people's lobby, provided it is strong enough, to defeat the forces of reaction and achieve a victory for reform.

Palestine and The Diaspora

By Samuel Dinin

I

THE pronouncements and actions of most of the professional Zionists outside Palestine, and of many of the Jews in Palestine, lend support to the charge that the problem of the Diaspora and of Diaspora Jews is not a matter of great concern to Zionists. The Diaspora to them is a nightmare from which they want to escape. It is *galut*—Exile—, an abnormal harassing existence which saps their energies as individuals and as a group, and makes a normal creative life all but impossible. It is true that, ideologically, there are few Zionists who are today "negaters of the *galut*." Yet it is also true that though they pay lip service to Ahad Ha'Amism or some other Zionist theory, which posits only the *centrality* of Palestine, and not Palestine as the sole center, they are in effect, negaters of the Diaspora. For they look upon life in the Diaspora as at best a necessary evil. It is too bad, they contend, that not all the Jews can go to Palestine at once, but if we want Judaism to survive, if we want some remnant of the Jewish people to save itself from extinction, then the upbuilding of Palestine must be the major task of Diaspora Jews. What happened in Germany, what is happening in Poland, is symptomatic of the precarious position of the Jew in the lands of the Diaspora, and is a vindication of the Zionist position on the Jewish question. If it could happen in Germany, it can happen in France and the United States. We must work against time, build a haven of refuge for the Jews of the world, a place they can truly call their own, a home.

The gravity of the situation of the Jews in Germany and Poland cannot be minimized, but we must not permit the tragic occurrences in these countries to distort our view of realities in the relationship of Palestine to the Diaspora. We must approach the problem of Palestine historically rather than hysterically. Granted that at any moment in the history of the Jews in the making, there will be a German Jewry or a Polish Jewry which will need Palestine as a place of refuge from Nurnberg laws or tailoring in Lodz. There is little likelihood, unless one believes in the inevitability of the coming of fascism, and in the inevitability of anti-Semitism under all fascisms, that the whole world will go mad at the same time, and that it will be necessary for sixteen million Jews to knock at the gates of Palestine for admission simultaneously. If this were to happen, Palestine would be of little help. Even today Palestine has accommodated and can accommodate only a small percentage of the Jews in Poland and Germany who want to enter.

To point to the Nurnberg laws as a vindication of Zionism is to play with the hands of the liberal and radical who are hostile to Palestine. Sure, they will say, it only goes to prove that Zionism is due to anti-Semitism, and thrives on it and because of it. But Palestine will not do away with anti-Semitism, in the lands of the Diaspora; it only diverts the attention of the Jews from the real causes of anti-Semitism, and prevents them from using their energies in the struggle for a new order in which there will be no room for discrimination against the Jew or the negro or any other oppressed minority.

The official, fund-raising Zionists, in heralding the role of Palestine as a haven of refuge for oppressed Jews whenever and wherever such oppression may arise,

distort the importance of Palestine as a solution for the problems of the Jews. But what is worse, from the point of view of the relationship of Palestine to the Diaspora, they give strength and sanction to the "negaters of the *galut*," and assign to the Diaspora a horrendous role. The Diaspora becomes a place from which the Jews must escape, the more quickly the better.

II

The Diaspora fares no better in the hands of the Zionist philosophers, theoreticians and writers, who emphasize the role of Palestine as a haven of refuge for Judaism, for the Jewish spirit. Even Ahad Ha'Am, who predicated his Zionism on the assumption that there must be a revival of the spirit of Judaism in the Diaspora, assigned to the Diaspora a sterile and uncreative role. The spiritual center he wanted to set up in Palestine was to be a center of imitation and emulation for the rest of the Jewries of the world. This implies that real creativity can come from Diaspora Jews. Only in Palestine will it be possible to create a real new vital indigenous modern Jewish culture. The best the Jews in the Diaspora can hope to do is to imitate and emulate what Palestine does. And judging by the complaints voiced in the Palestinian press during the last five years by the more critical of the Palestinian authors, Palestine has become, in its own eyes, the only worthwhile Jewish center, and is creating the only worthwhile Jewish art, Jewish literature, Jewish drama, Jewish music, Jewish scholarship, and Jewish socialism. There is a tendency to snub and to deprecate the scholarship and the poetry and the art of Diaspora Jewry. The attitude is one of: What can you expect of the Diaspora? It is impossible to live a real Jewish life in the Diaspora, to be really creatively Jewish. Even where there is a recognition that Jewish life in the Diaspora will continue for hundreds of years to come, and that the bulk of Jewry will for many, many generations live in the lands of the Diaspora, the attitude is taken that though Judaism will continue to exist in the Diaspora, it will be a sterile, uncreative, moribund Judaism.

There is no denying that Palestine is exerting, and will continue to exert increasingly a tremendous influence on Jewish life in the Diaspora. Few of us realize to what extent it has revitalized Jewish life everywhere. Dr. Kaplan has given us an excellent summary of Palestine's contribution to Jewish life to date. "Palestine's contribution to Judaism," he writes, "is not a distant hope but a present reality. Palestine has become to the Jews everywhere a symbol of corporate existence. All Jewish activity throughout the Diaspora which bears a constructive character and has in it the promise of permanence derives from the inspiration of Palestine. It already exerts a cohesive influence among the different Jewries of the world and among the different groups in each of those Jewries. The Jew can remain a Jew without being constrained to follow a uniform regimen of practice. He can cultivate his convictions and preferences without endangering his status as a Jew, or weakening Jewish unity. But Palestine is not only beginning to emancipate the Jew from sterile uniformity; it is creating a cultural content to which he may apply his released energies. It is transforming Jewish education from the acquisition of values that belong to a dream world—so unreal seem most of the ideas in their traditional form when compared with the realities of present-day life—and from a Jewish replica of Protestant Sunday schooling, into a process of humanizing and spiritualizing the child's mental growth. It is stimulating Jewish art to change and enrich its media, its subject matter, its style. Its Keneset Yisrael, its efforts to reconstruct Jewish civil law, its 'religion of work' and its yearning for a vital religion of faith are symptoms of spiritual gestation which cannot but have a revitalizing effect on the entire organ-

ism of world-Jewry. The present influence of Palestine upon the Diaspora is but a dim forecast of the incalculable spiritual impetus that Jewish life will acquire when Palestinian civilization shall have grown to its full stature."*

The same people, however, who subscribe so readily to this summation of the significance of Palestine in modern Jewish life, ignore altogether what Dr. Kaplan has to say of Diaspora Jewish life, and of the relationship of the Diaspora to Palestine. Palestine has become what it is because of the Diaspora. It is being built not as a substitute for the Diaspora, but in order to normalize, to revitalize, to give organic unity to Jewish life in the Diaspora.

Indeed, if we want to save Palestine for the Jewish people, we shall have to discard, in fact as well as in theory, all our negativistic notions about the relationship of Palestine to the Diaspora. To brand the Diaspora as *galut,* to despair of a creative Jewish life in the lands of the Diaspora, to look upon the Diaspora only as a feeding place for Palestine, not only to blind ourselves to the realities of Jewish life and Jewish history, but also to endanger the future of Palestine as a creative spiritual center for all of Jewry.

We must learn a few simple propositions. The vast majority of the Jewish people will continue to live in the lands of the Diaspora for many generations to come. These Jews have their own excuse for being Jews in these lands. We cannot make them or their lives a means to an end, even though this end be for the future good of the people as a whole. These Jews where they are and as they are constitute a greater concern for us than the small commonwealth now existing in Palestine. In the last analysis, the Zionist proposition that Palestine is and must be the *sine qua non* of any future Jewish survival is no more true than the proposition that Palestine cannot exist and thrive without the Diaspora. The establishment of a national Jewish home in Palestine is supposed to be a project undertaken by the entire Jewish people. It is an attempt to re-constitute the Jewish people once more as an international people with a national home. Palestine as another petty state, with a chauvinistic polity, would not be worthwhile striving for and fighting for. Palestine as a center of an international people, setting an example of a new type of nationality, acting as a leaven among the peoples of the world, making for peace and social justice, would be worthwhile living for. Such a Palestine can be created only through the concerted and cooperative effort of Palestine and the Diaspora. It must be a cooperative of two *partners* in a mutual enterprise wherein one cannot do without the other.

*Judaism as a Civilization, pages 278-9.

III

Of all the Hebrew writers, Dr. S. Ravidowitz has been one of the few who has seen the need for a rethinking of the relationship of Palestine and the Diaspora. He is the one who was most responsible for calling together a world conference of Hebraists and for organizing the League or Covenant of Hebraists. It is worthwhile quoting in this connection some of the things he said a few years ago. "This," he said, "we must accept as a first principle: we live, in the real sense of the word, only *that life which we ourselves create,* and to the extent that *we* create it; that which we do not create we do not live. If it is true of an individual, it is true all the more of a community, a social group, a nation. . . . The people of Israel may have no political, or economic or cultural independence. A center of emulation, however, will not save it. Everywhere that a Jewish group lives—there exists a *center of creativity.* The Jews of the Diaspora will unite and assume the responsibility for building Palestine—not as a result of emulation . . . but as a result of their creativity, because what they create will of itself bring them into close contact with their fellow Jews everywhere and

with the Palestine which is being created by them." (*Moznayim*, Vol. 9, No. 1).

The Diaspora is neither a blessing, as the Reformists believe, nor a curse as so many Zionists believe. It is a fact, a fact which must be accepted, not ignored or apologized for, or rationalized. As Ravidowitz says in the same article, the face of the Jewish people in the Diaspora may be turned to Palestine, but the key to the solution of the problem of the spiritual survival of Diaspora Jewry, lies in the Diaspora itself, not in Palestine. Every Diaspora group is an individuum, a unique entity. Each group must strive to merge all the relationships which give meaning to its existence into a new whole, which will contain all that makes life worthwhile. The Jews in any one land are members of a larger group. Their lives are inextricably interwoven with the lives of their fellow countrymen. Political and economic and social events affect the security and well-being of the Jews and are in turn influenced by the Jews. The Jews cannot stand aside and watch events take their course. It is their affair too. Their future is bound up with a social order in which they as well as their fellow countrymen will be able to have such economic security as will make a rich cultural life possible.

But they are also concerned with their own Jewish life. They have a long and rich tradition in common. Because of the situation of the Jews in the modern world, certain relationships follow, and these relationships necessitate certain courses of action. To restore to the Jew the unity that religion once gave him, to revivify the tradition that he has inherited, to make possible a new creative Jewish life, it has been found necessary to establish a national Jewish homeland in Palestine. To create a new order in one country, it is necessary to fight the evils of the old order in other countries as well. To save the Jews of a United States from a fate similar to that which has befallen the Jews in Germany, it is necessary to fight the Hitler dictatorship and to lend distressed Jews everywhere a helping hand. This is not a philanthropic task which should be undertaken by a few rich Jews; it must be a cooperative task of World Jewry, and is a result of the peculiar international situation of the Jewish people. To make Jewish life in any one country worthwhile and creative and thus to enhance and to enrich the cultures of other cultural groups within any one country, it is necessary to create a Jewish community, to effect a real communal organization, which undertake to solve cooperatively all the problems which Jews have in common. It is not a question of either—or, of Palestine or the Diaspora. It is not a question of first and last things, of first let us fight against war and fascism and the establishment of a new order, and then we can take up the question of Jewish life and culture. We must fight simultaneously on all fronts. For all of these relationships constitute the whole of Jewish life. They are all part of our problems—the Jewish problem, because of what we were and are in the world. To solve one part without the other will not bring about the Jewish life we desire. For the sake of the Diaspora, then, for the sake of making the life of every Jew in the Diaspora better and more beautiful, and more worthwhile, we must fight war and fascism; we must help build a social order based on social justice; we must put our affairs in order in each country, establish a real community which will give unity and meaning and expression to our existence as a group within a group; we must build a national homeland in Palestine, whose foundations will be peace and justice.

And for the sake of Palestine, we must see to it that the national reawakening is not limited to Palestine alone, but that it should have its counterpart wherever the Jewish people dwells. And for the sake of Palestine, we must see to it that the Hebraic renaissance, the revival of the Hebrew language and Hebrew culture, the establishment of a new Hebraic civilization, should not be limited to Pal-

estine alone, but must find root in Diaspora Jewish life. For if it doesn't, the very future of Palestine will be imperiled, and what it will create will be of little moment. That a few of the leaders in Palestine are aware of the necessity for this reciprocal relationship of Palestine and the Diaspora, I have already indicated.

Barash asks in one of his articles in *Moznayim* whether Hebrew literature in Palestine is to be a literature of a tribe or a literature of a people. This question reveals a fear that as Jewish national life in Palestine becomes firmly established, the cultural products will become localized and parochialized, and will have little meaning for Jews outside of Palestine. Here too there is a recognition that Palestine *alone* cannot solve the *whole* problem of the culture of Israel, a culture for which tens of generations sacrificed their lives. Unless the venture is cooperative, the Hebraic culture in the lands of the Diaspora will assume different forms and expressions, and will develop in directions entirely alien to the present cultural undertakings in Palestine.

And at the last Zionist Congress in Lucerne, Ben Gurion brought home with great force the reciprocal relationship of Palestine and the Diaspora. If we were by some miracle able to admit at once a million Jews to Palestine, he asked, where could we get a million Jews, not who want to go — that might not be so difficult, but who would be needed, who would fit into the Palestinian scheme of things. For what we need are farmers and skilled laborers, and common laborers. And not only farmers, but farmers willing to live cooperatively. And where are there a million Jews who are ready and able and willing to live such a life? Shall we find them among the merchants and the teachers and the writers? To prepare a million Jews for Palestine, Jews who will fit in with the economy and life of Palestine, we must virtually revolutionize Jewish life in the Diaspora, economically. We shall have to redistribute Jews occupationally, to reorient their attitude towards labor. And not only that — we must teach them that the cooperative and collective life is the life by which we can best achieve the ends and values for which Jews died in the past, and for which they now want to live.

That the Labor Zionist leaders recently called a conference on the Productivization of the Jewish Youth, is an indication that they have at last begun to realize what the true relationship of the Diaspora to Palestine is, and how much Palestine is and will be dependent in all of its complex relationships, upon what happens in the Diaspora. Protests have been voiced in many quarters against the attitude of some of the German Jews in Palestine towards the Hebrew language and to the Jewish folkways and mores. It is only another indication that the problem of Zionism is not merely to colonize as many Jews as possible in Palestine. It is far more than that; it is to create a new type of national Jewish life everywhere, with Palestine as a center.

Zionists in this and other countries who view the task of the Zionist organization as one of raising funds for Palestine, are short-sighted individuals, who will do Palestine more harm than good in the long run. Zionists who are merely onlookers on the American Jewish scene, who do not concern themselves with problems of Hebrew education and Hebrew culture, and Jewish communal organization and the Synagogue, will find in another generation, that the new generation of Jews will be deaf to their fund-raising pleas, for Hebrew and Palestine will have no meaning for them.

IV

Ravidowitz's plan for the organization of a World League or Covenant of Hebraists, which is about to be realized, is good enough as far as it goes. But language and literature and Jewish education are not the only things Palestine and the Diaspora have in common. What about religion and the Synagogue and civil law

and folkways and customs? What about economic and international problems, and a host of other problems which could be mentioned? Let us start with a League of Hebraists. But we must not stop there. We must extend the sphere of cooperative activity to all the interests that Palestine shares with the Diaspora.

We must drive home the realization to Jews the world over that Palestine and the Diaspora are joint partners in a common endeavor. One without the other, one to the exclusion of the other, one at the expense of the other, will lead to the demoralization of both. What we are trying to do is not to establish one kind of life in the Diaspora and another in Palestine. We are trying to establish a new type of Jewish life for Palestine and the Diaspora. The richness and the vitality of this new life will depend upon the extent to which both are interdependent, and sustain each other. Just as much as Palestine is the affair and the creation of the Diaspora, so Palestine must realize that the Diaspora is its affair too.

Fascism: American Style

By Isaac Katz*

I

THE thesis of "The Coming American Fascism," by Lawrence Dennis,** can be stated in its simplest terms as follows: (1) capitalism is doomed, (2) the choice for the future lies between communism and fascism, (3) fascism is preferable. But Mr. Dennis realizing that the present fascist governments in Europe are not likely to gain converts to the cause of fascism by their own examples, points out in his introduction that fascism does not necessarily mean Italian fascism or German Nazism. Fascism, to Mr. Dennis, is a philosophy of a planned economy. It differs from communism in its denial of the class war, and in its retention of profits, property rights, private initiative and the free market. However, these, together with every other feature of the new state, will be subordinate to the "national plan," which it is the purpose of fascism to carry out.

The national plan will be an expression of the popular will. The present system of having courts thwart the popular will, because of an ancient document called the "Constitution," will be changed. Henceforth the popular will is to be interpreted by those who constitute the executive and legislative branches of the new government, for they will be alive to the needs of the situation. (In another portion of the book, Mr. Dennis asserts that the popular will is moulded by those in control of the opinion forming agencies, like the school, the radio, the movies and the press. He therefore suggests that the new government take over these opinion forming agencies in order to insure its own success and popularity with the people. We shall thus have a situation under fascism where those who are to decide what the popular will is are the same people who decide what it ought to be. Of this inconsistency, as well as of other inconsistencies, Mr. Dennis seems to be unaware.)

The new state will be operated by the "elite." Let us not jump to the hasty conclusion that the elite are the personal friends of the future dictator. The elite, according to Mr. Dennis, include "capitalists deriving most of their income from property, business enterprises, and farmers, the professional classes, and, generally, the employed whose salaries are considerably above the average, or, say, about $3,000 a year for the entire country. . . .

*Mr. Katz is a lawyer, residing in New York City.

**Harper & Bros., New York, N. Y., 1936.

The term is applied equally to those who are potentially influential and powerful, and those who are actually influential and powerful. It is also applied equally to those who are influential and powerful in antisocial and illegal ways. It is the fact that persons are influential and powerful, not how they use their influence and power, that classes them with the elite."

In the new state, as we have already mentioned, everything is to be subject to the national plan. Says Mr. Dennis: "No minority, religious, racial, or cultural, can be allowed to inculcate doctrines or impart social attitudes violently inconsistent with social order. . . . This does not mean that different races, religions, and groups, may not be allowed to flourish and maintain certain group peculiarities, provided none of their peculiarities seriously jeopardize the social plan. To hear many liberals talk these days, one would suppose that the end of social organization was to make the world safe for minority self-expression. Certainly Christianity, when in political control, whether through the Roman Catholic Church or any one of the Protestant sects, has never followed this principle, nor did the Jews when they were a nation."

Courts of some sort will exist under fascism, but a litigant forced to seek relief there will be unable to claim that a right of his had been violated, as no rights will exist. His only plea to be relieved from the effects of an oppressive statute will be that that statute did not affect the national plan, that, judged from the national plan, the law was a mistake.

II

It is impossible within the limits of this review specifically to expose the many mistakes of fact and theory committed by Mr. Dennis. The communist will demolish with ease the arguments contained in the chapter "Why Fascism instead of Communism." The pacifist has at hand the necessary answer for Mr. Dennis' plea for a large standing army and navy second to none. The internationalist will find much fault with the theory advanced of the relationship of states. Indeed, practically everyone but the elite will disagree with something or other in this book. The elite may embrace fascism at first because it means power for themselves. Their attitude may be seen in the recent plebiscite in Estonia, reported in the newspapers of February 27, 1936, where the people voted to return from dictatorship to democracy by a vote of three to one. The significance of the last named figure is only realized in conjunction with Mr. Dennis' assertion that the elite constitute roughly about one-third of the population.

In his discussion of "Fascism and Woman," the author scoffs at the prevalent idea that fascism requires women to retire from their activities and to return to the home and kiddies. And then, in veiled language, he suggests the same thing. The fascist either cannot or will not understand that the ordinary woman can be creative in ways other than the biological. All the fascist talk about training the female to be a wife and mother assumes that she is fit for little else, and that being a wife and mother should be her lot in life. The fascist does not once mention the training of the male to be a husband and father, although the husband must live with the wife as the wife with the husband, and the father must cooperate with the mother in rearing the children. Is such training imparted to the male in his mother's milk, while the female can never learn unless she is specifically trained? Training for the female to be a wife and mother as a political policy should be advocated only if there is similar training for the male to be a husband and father.

Treating fascism as a serious philosophy of government instead of an attempt by a few to seize power for themselves at the expense of the people, we discover that its central idea is the absolute power of the state over persons and property;—the state can do no wrong. A liberal

philosophy would be based upon the limited power of the state over persons, with possibly absolute power over property. The limitations on the government's power over persons, in liberal philosophy, would be that nothing should interfere with the freedom of speech, religion, conscience and press. The liberal says that the state has done wrong, does wrong, and might do wrong. There should therefore be certain limitations on the power of the states.

The fascist philosophy teaches that all government is based on force; but it limits force to physical force or a threat of physical force. It seems to have no place for a force based on moral restraint. However, at least as much can be accomplished by a force flowing from morality as by a force based on violence. The concept of God has always been a restraining influence where all else failed. Things were left undone, not because they could not be done, but because they would be displeasing in the sight of God. Then came the so-called Enlightenment, and religion ceased to be recognized as a political force. But a moral restraint continued over the government in the form of the constitution and the doctrine of the supremacy of the law. Things were now left undone because they could not be done "lawfully." There was always some limitation to what the government could do. This is not to say that the constitution is perfect, or that it does not need amendment to make it conform to changed conditions. It does mean that a moral restraint has prevailed and should prevail over the caprices of those in power.

Let us not deceive ourselves. There is no inherent sanctity in a decision of the Supreme Court. The Court has no machinery to enforce its decisions. There is nothing in the Constitution to prevent a President from "stuffing" the Court with judges favorable to his policy, to override an adverse decision. Such "stuffing" has already occurred in American constitutional history. President Roosevelt and the Congress must have been tempted to repeat this performance to insure the validity of the N.R.A. and the A.A.A., but did not yield. The moral restraint of law over government would have been dissipated by such action. The doctrine of the supremacy of the law to which all pay homage would have been violated were the judiciary to be controlled by so simple a formula.

It was this same doctrine that there are certain liberties not to be trespassed by the government which caused a Jewish judge to concur with the majority of the Supreme Court in holding unconstitutional a law which would enjoin the publication of newspapers publishing libelous articles; in that case a newspaper publishing articles libeling the Jewish people. There must be freedom of speech and freedom of thought; as a great liberal jurist once wrote, "not free thought for those who agree with us, but freedom for the thought that we hate." If our present government has not as yet attained this stage of enlightenment, we should aid in educating it. In no event should the government go backward.

Mr. Dennis contends that freedom of conscience under liberal capitalism has never been an absolute freedom. Even, if true, what of it? Few would claim that our present system is perfect. The problem is: do we want more or less freedom? Another illustration will perhaps emphasize more clearly the illogicality of the fascist position. Mr. Dennis demonstrates that under our present system, property is surrounded by greater safeguards than human life. Even in wartime, when normal barriers are let down, property cannot be taken for public purposes without just compensation, while human life can be conscripted at will. Mr. Dennis decries this practice, and so do we. But he advocates fascism, which would conscript property as well as humans. We say that the individual deserves at least the same protection that is now accorded property. While the fascist would keep the individual in his

present status, and lower property to that level, the liberal would raise the individual to the present status of property, if not higher. Mr. Dennis is quite correct in his exposition that liberal capitalism is not quite so liberal. But the logical and sensible solution is to make society more liberal, and not fascistic.

The fascist government plan betrays an amazing resemblance to the old system of absolute monarchy. There too the individual had to rely on the ruler's being kindly disposed toward him as his only protection against tyranny and oppression. A good king might not harm the individual; a bad king would crush the people for the private gain of the aristocracy. The founding fathers set forth in the Constitution certain principles of restraint on the government's absolute power over the spiritual liberty of persons. These principles have been tested, and have been found to be good. They should not be surrendered to anyone, and to the fascist least of all.

III

Fortunately, the Jew will probably remain unconverted to fascism. A minority people in the midst of a majority, the Jew has always been and still is. Even in his own homeland the Jew is a minority. The Jew bears in his memory the centuries of torture he has suffered. He bears on his scarred back the mark of the pogrom. He still winces at the Nazi whip. Will the Jew trust a government which must decide whether the Jew "seriously jeopardizes" the social plan? It is fatuous to argue that fascism is not necessarily anti-Semitic, and to point to Italy as an example. Italy may not be anti-Semitic; Germany is. It is thus evident that a difference of dictators means a difference of policies. Mention must be made, however, that in Italy the Jews form a negligible part of the population. Anti-Semitism does flourish in those countries, like Germany, Poland and Rumania, where the Jews are more numerous.

The Jew complains that fascist leaders may formulate an anti-Semitic policy with impunity, and then have the government carry it out. In other words, under fascism the Jew has to trust that the government will not oppress him. The Psalmist might have anticipated this situation when he said: "Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no help." Without any discussion of the present American safeguards against anti-Semitism, we can say that it is far better to remain under a government which does not pursue a hostile policy rather than to change to one which may or may not, as interested individuals see fit.

Quite apart from the probability of anti-Semitism under fascism, the Jew should champion the rights of minorities and stubbornly oppose fascism. The Jew's suffering should have taught him to beware of any political philosophy that might lead to the oppression of minorities. It would ill become the Jew to bemoan his own fate as a minority people, and then condone the persecution of others too powerless to protect themselves. Racial, religious and cultural minorities should realize that good fortune should not change the Jew from a sympathizer to a passive oppressor.